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THE MODIFIED MISSION TYPE ORDER: A VEHICLE FOR
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE US ARMY

by

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Preface

I chose to write a paper on Army SC because I believe that the land component is the best way to seize and hold information “territory” within the area of operations. The simplest, yet most effective idea I could devise to change the execution of SC was the modified mission type order. Even the most junior soldier would be familiar with the general construct and how the material applied directly to him, as an individual. Mission type orders allow the Army to step around the bureaucracy surrounding things with the word “strategy” and focus on the intent and the actions that will achieve that intent.

There are more than a few contentious issues with this subject. I fear that unless we realize that all communication has a purpose or agenda, regardless of how pure we attempt to make the information; therefore, the consumer will always determine bias. SC in combat is the art of repeating our intent through many actions (operations), and amplifying it through carefully chosen messages inside the Area of Operations (AO) *and* within the global information domain (regardless of country). Our information must confirm our themes. It must reach not only those in the AO, but our allies, and those members of the silent majority who consume the information and accept or tolerate our level of bias.

I’d like to thank LtCol Diane Ficke and Karen Katzenbach for their leadership and guidance as I explored the world of strategic communication. Additionally, though I reviewed hundreds of sources for information, I’d like to thank a few experts for their contributions to the field: Mr. John Rendon, Col Ralph Baker, and BGen Mari Elder.

Abstract

What is the optimal structure/organization to develop strategic communication (SC) at the HQDA/ASCC level? What mechanisms are best suited for dissemination of SC? This paper approaches the problem by discussing the operational requirement for SCs as a driver for how to organize and conduct SC at the Corps and below. The paper assumes that the Global War on Terror is a war for “hearts and minds” and contends that Army SC *must* engage targets both inside *and* outside the Area of Operations. The paper offers guidelines for the division of labor between different organizations as well as the focus of operations at different levels of command. Finally, the paper discusses modifications to mission type orders to synchronize SC with operations at all levels of command within the Corps, and offers recommendations to create enduring changes in doctrine, organization, training, materiel, logistics, personnel, and facilities (DOTMLPF).

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Requirement

In 2004, the United States lost a decisive point in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) when the US Army Criminal Investigation Command released a report detailing torture and prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison¹. The Strategic Communication (SC) value of those misdeeds caused cascading effects that rippled through the first decade of the 21st century. How should the Army turn one of its darkest moments into a catalyst for victory? Who should be responsible, what's the right organizational structure, and what actions will ensure that the Army SC highlights the strength of the nation?

Executing SC in the combat environment of the GWOT calls for tasks and results at the operational and tactical levels. As a successful counterinsurgency engages the local populace to surround and outnumber insurgents, so must SC move from constricted planning and engagement by a minimal PA force to using every soldier to create entry points into the social network of the undecided Muslim majority. Communications require synchronization and deconfliction like operational fires and effects. As with any tactical engagement, messages must be aimed and fired by trained soldiers who understand their orders, and not individually aimed from a headquarters outside the AOR. These SC fire elements should work in a combined arms fashion, coordinating with PA elements at the Brigade and Corps to expand and direct dissemination and seize strategic communication decisive points that contribute to the overall campaign. In short, success in this endeavor demands a modification of mission type orders at the Corps through brigade combat team (BCT) level (not just words in an OPLAN), and the organizational, training, and equipment changes required to institutionalize the change.

Audience and Terms

A comprehensive study of the global SC environment involves too many variables to illustrate an argument; consequently, GWOT and the OIF counterinsurgency fight offer a more manageable frame of reference. For simplicity, this paper considers combat operations rather than include phase 0 and phase 4. Additionally, to limit the scope of discussion, this paper recognizes the natural function of a division HQ as a synchronizer and aggregator, but deals directly with the Corps and the BCT.

For SC success, PA staff and information operations planners must work even more closely to develop roles and responsibilities that accomplish the mission without infringing on the equities of each community (i.e. information operations cannot be legally conducted against US persons and PA communications must remain truthful). Planners at the Corps and BCT should familiarize themselves with the solutions outlined below in order to arm themselves with the widest array of tools possible to develop SC products and train their forces.

The foundation for such a discussion lies in standard terms of reference. JP 5-0 defines strategic communication as, “Focused United States Government efforts to understand and engage key audiences in order to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of United States Government interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power.²” The Rendon Group, a SC consulting firm for the National Security Council (et al.) offers a slightly different characterization that strategic communication is a centrally generated message from an authoritative source and used to convey policy or communicate actions as a derivative of that policy. John Rendon also proposes that in a strategic

communication environment, “what I say is meaningless, what you hear and believe and *do* is critical.”³”

Additionally, as FM 3-24 describes internal and external variants of active and passive support for insurgency⁴, new terms active and passive SC describe measures that help break down popular support for insurgency while reinforcing legitimate authority. Active communications, take the form of targeted messages synchronized with other combat or support operations to create a synergistic effect at a specific time and place (an address from the Commanding General (CG) at new school site or water well). Conversely, passive communications are not preplanned media engagements, but draw attention to actions and behaviors that support SC themes. Examples might include the capture and dissemination of a picture taken by embedded media, soldiers attending a large family gathering, or fellow soldiers showing a parent smiling as an elated daughter receives food or books from a US soldier. Different media outlets offer the opportunity to engage the passive majority⁵, and expand the effect beyond the gratitude of US parents, hometown US citizens, US politicians.

Problems

Half an Audience

What US military communications speak directly to the “Arab street”? The statement that Global War on Terror is a war for the “hearts and minds” of moderate Muslims has become trite, at least in the US. Coincidentally, one of the most common complaints of joint /multi-national officers in the “War for Public Opinion” research elective at US Air Force’s Air Command and Staff College ⁶ is the lack of positive media stories in US news outlets. Assuming the GWOT engages a basic extremist network where each extremist links with two other extremists, then an army of 1 million active members constitutes a network of 3 million. Although this number exceeds total US military capability, it falls well short of the 1.2 billion moderate Muslims worldwide. Combining these pieces of information, how can the US military conclude that if US media fail to provide positive stories on coalition operations to their own populations, the Arabic media and the rest of the global media will provide their audiences with positive reports about coalition activity? Realizing the problem inherent in the preceding sentence begs the conclusion that if Arab and global media aren’t sharing information with the moderate Muslims, they either lack information, motivation, or both. Unless the US wishes to concede the information domain, strategic communicators must *directly* engage not just local audiences within Iraq and Afghanistan, but moderate Muslims and their information networks worldwide.

Roles

Having established the requirement to speak to a global audience, one must ask “whose job is it to communicate strategically, and what prevents mission success?” The State Department (DOS) directs SC efforts. Their mission construct includes short term

communications, Public Affairs aspects of a campaign, long term communications, Diplomacy, and broadcasting. Unfortunately, responsibility for the mission area does not mean capability to satisfy the mission.⁷

With thousands of troops the land component, specifically the Army, occupies the best “terrain” to lead collection and dissemination for the military elements of short term SC for the GWOT. The June 2007 US National Policy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication developed priorities for modernized communications, mass audiences, and the “diplomacy of deeds.”⁸ The Army already operates the largest communications infrastructure in many austere environments. Likewise soldiers offer thousands of “citizen diplomats” across the Iraq and Afghanistan, direct contact no other agency can duplicate. And by splitting the focus of SC, the Corps and higher echelons can target the international moderate Muslim audience while lower echelons directly contend for the support of the local audience necessary to defeat insurgency.

Who in the Army does or should conduct these communications? To an outsider, there seems to be a friction and turf marking between the PA and PSYOP (specifically PSYOP communities). JP 3-53, *Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations*, offers an avenue for resolution. On one hand JP 3-53 claims, “Actions ... may have a psychological impact, but they are not PSYOP unless the primary purpose is to influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning, decision making, or behavior of the foreign target audience (TA).”⁹ PSYOP personnel below the Corps level should continue to analyze and prescribe behaviors (passive SC) that synchronize soldier actions with strategic communication themes. Conversely, when discussing the relationship between PA and PSYOP, JP 3-53 states, “As open sources to foreign countries and the United States, PA channels can be used to disseminate international information. **To maintain the credibility of military PA, care must be taken to protect against slanting or**

manipulating such PA channels. PA channels can be used to provide facts that will counter foreign propaganda, including disinformation, directed at the United States (*sic*).”¹⁰

The question identified by the preceding quotes isn’t “should we communicate?” rather “how should we communicate and which messages?” The answers lie with “who has the capability and the skill set for mass communication?” and “how can they communicate within the doctrinal limitations?” The last quote from JP 3-53 can be interpreted, without defeating the intent, by stating that PA should broadcast as much information to as large a global audience as possible while PSYOP personnel shape this saturated information domain for the operational fight. As cultural experts, PSYOP personnel approach information from the viewpoint of perception, rather than information dissemination. Malcolm Gladwell defines the construct as a “thin-slicer,” an expert with such knowledge in an area that important features and inconsistencies intuitively leap out in the blink of an eye¹¹. A commander’s PSYOP “thin slicer” should comb friendly and adversary media to identify and connect information that reinforces SC themes. The commander then emphasizes these elements through active SC. In this manner, PA organizations and individual soldiers provide truthful information and action while interagency and PSYOP personnel determine the most influential themes for in country and external audiences.

Organizational Inertia

The organizational issue that prevents the Army from making an operational difference remains the absence of one or more clear SC objectives for winning the war on terror. With Army Initiative #7, General Casey, Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), tasked the Officer Commanding of Public Affairs (OCPA) build SC capabilities to communicate effectively with internal and external audiences. While not wrong to perform a service mission, Headquarters for

the Department of the Army (HQDA) focused on service growth and recapitalization, and left warfighting issues to Army Service Component Commands (ASCC) such as the warfighting Corps. Consequently, HQDA listed 27 bullets identifying government and public target audiences, but only two bullets on “those who oppose us, the enemy.”¹² The problem arises because the Army priorities above appear to diverge from, rather than contribute to US government (USG) strategic communication themes for winning the GWOT.

Solutions

Objectives

The first step to developing an operational solution requires the Army to develop a GWOT centered objective that links service imperatives to USG SC priorities. This linkage ties Army efforts to Mr. Rendon’s “authoritative source” above. In this manner, component commands can plan and execute operations in lock step with the combatant command’s interagency efforts and executive branch strategic guidance, see Table 3 below.

Organizational Framework

The next step requires building a framework that translates the operational guidance above into action. While Perkins and Scott from the Joint Information Operations Center recommended mission type orders as a method for guiding combatant commands planning, they only described the “what” as targeting/themes/and timelines. They but avoided a discussion of “how” subordinate unit might formulate operations¹³ Such examples are critical to fulfilling the service considerations, and coordinating instructions for multiple subordinate units to ensure the linkage developed in the previous paragraph evolves into actionable procedures in the field.

To build the framework the Corps must **establish** focus, **define** personnel roles and responsibilities, and **execute** those roles and responsibilities via the same fragmentary order that executes combat forces, not a “stove pipe” guidance that only addresses public affairs or information operations personnel. Corps level instructions should focus on building what the author calls a strategic communication “mosaic”. Such a mosaic should use a stoplight chart to describe the progress of different BCTs and along SC themes. Coloring need not be precisely standardized, since SC audiences and interpretations will be locally contextual for each BCT. The Corps commander must keep an eye for positive or negative SC trends across the AO and information decisive points such as reactions to elections (governance) or reactions to US SC regarding the death of al Zarqawi (extremism/security)¹⁴. A negative trend in two BCTs may indicate an anomaly, highlight a need for individual operational changes in the affected BCTs or divisions, or point to an error in SC themes or shift in the information environment. By monitoring the mosaic, the Corps commander avoids the tactical details of communicating in a locally relevant context while maintaining the ability to “steer” both the local and external SC effort by actively reinforcing particular themes.

Figure 1 uses the Multi National Corps Iraq division structure from the author’s last deployment to illustrate a notional mosaic (shaded dark red, light yellow, and medium green) that presents the Corps commander with different choices. The figure arrays Divisions and their (notional) subordinate BCTs as rows and SC themes as columns. A favorable mosaic would reflect a majority of green shading with few areas remaining light yellow for themes/media/or advocacy still under development.

For this example, the Corps commander must first determine whether there is an anomaly in Baghdad or in the South East. For the external audiences, how are coalition allies fully

engaged? Is population composition or density altering the way communications are received? What causes such a disparity? Locally, how are themes interpreted by the BCT staff and subsequently by local leadership? Second, when the commander notes a broad trend, he must act quickly and increase priority of effort for subordinate units, interagency and liaison officers in order to reverse the negative momentum in the “Extremism Endangers Families” theme. Finally, the commander must choose how to react to “Self Governance.” Since the problem crosses just one Division boundary, the possibility of a thematic or presentation problem like the one just discussed seems lower than likelihood of an operational issue (such as competition between local leaders or a local struggle not aligned with the way US commanders partition command responsibility).

	Self Governance	Economic Opportunity /Standard of Living	Regional Leadership/Equality	Extremism Endangers Families	Sectarian Cooperation/ Islamic Fraternity Success
MND-N					
BCT-1					
BCT-2					
MND-B					
BCT-1					
BCT-2					
MND-CS					
BCT-1					
BCT-2					
MNF-W					
BCT-1					
BCT-2					
MND-SE					
BCT-1					
BCT-2					

Figure 1 Notional Corps-level SC Mosaic

At the tactical level, the BCT commander receives mission type orders and focuses on translating intent and themes into locally relevant tactical messages that communicate SC themes inside his combat zone. Some messages may be active, meaning that the BCT commander and his key officers engage the populace and the media directly. But the majority of SC will likely be passive, meaning unit and soldier actions re-affirm SC themes, either verbally, through interaction, or even by passing out something like a story/poster/or sticker¹⁵. While active tasks are best suited to leadership, junior troops who have the widest contact with the host nation population offer the best opportunity to continuously and repetitively engage.

Roles and Responsibilities

A complete solution must look inside the Corps and BCT organizations to define roles and responsibilities. As described in the previous section, PA and PSYOP provide the primary forces the communication facet of SC. With a new operational model, the Army must choose between increasing the force structure, changing tactics/techniques/procedures (TTP), or some combination of the two. A review of current composition and “new” strategic communication tasks reveals no new requirements for PA “strategic capabilities,” but **a need to change the emphasis, improve information sharing, and expand mission essential tasks** within PA and PSYOP organizations, enabling current manpower to adapt to new requirements.

In their current configuration, Corps PA will likely consist of a PA Operations Center (PAOC) with as many as 32 soldiers serving as a media operations center for military and civil journalists. Divisions may include a Mobile PA Detachment (MPAD) with up to 20 soldiers performing traditional broadcast, print, and media operations. BCTs may possess a PA Detachment (PAD) with as many as 7 soldiers. This basic PAD currently provides the capability to plan media operations, collect audio and pictures, forward completed media products to

external personnel and locations, provide media escort, and conduct traditional press conferences.¹⁶ Regardless of command echelon, as today's near real-time battle space shifts away from print media, the replacement of certain print and TV mission essential tasks with social networking and internet media tasks seems most applicable for the journalist and broadcast journalist specialties.

To capitalize on improved task organization, SC must convey supporting themes to the maximum audience, especially the passive majority, in minimum time. This means “targeting” the right audiences through the largest **relevant** array of media. Current Army PA doctrine identifies a gap in “targeting” media messages. FM 3-61 states, “Information Strategies (*sic*) is the sum of all actions and activities, which contribute to informing the American public and the Army,”¹⁷ By focusing on the American public and the Army, current information strategy doesn't attempt to communicate even basic news to adversary and “undecided” consumers. Tables 1 and 2 below discuss a division of responsibilities for PA and PSYOP, and focus areas to close the targeting gap by addressing in country and broader international audiences.

PA Plans Responsibilities:	PSYOP/IO Responsibilities:
Media Estimate (beyond TV, radio, & print... internet & credible sympathetic info outlets)	Advise Commander on Perceptions of Blue/Red Messages
Determine SC Audiences (in country and international + populace and adversary)	Determine and Refine Cultural Profiles (Related International and Adversary)
Synchronize Themes w/ Higher HQ	Synchronize SC Targeting w/ Kinetic Ops
Measure 1 st and 2 nd order effect (media)	Assess 3 rd order effect (leaders & population)

Table 1 Integration and Deconfliction of Responsibilities

Table 2 highlights important features from an analysis of the information environment.¹⁸ Using Table 2 as a guideline, PA Planners focus on moving information, receiving consolidating similar threads from multiple subordinates, conducting active SC to amplify and expand complementary stories from subordinates. By focusing on the relationships within the

information infrastructure, PA personnel develop additional audiences for the commander to achieve his intent, possibly through international third party advocates or rival local factions.¹⁹

PA personnel avoid the issue of conflicting loyalties by planning the broadest possible dissemination on operational events and media where the strategic communication environment offers the opportunity to educate global audiences or refute erroneous adversary claims. By ensuring information reaches indirect communicators (influential local professionals/religious leaders/political leaders), PA soldiers expand their input beyond traditional combat camera and media interviews and transform messages from rifle shots into shotgun shells (blog, social network, and viral media sites (i.e. YouTube)) and indirect fires..

PA Focus Areas:	PSYOP/IO Focus Areas:
Information Infrastructure – <i>Focus on Host Nation and Adversary Decision Aids – Personnel, Satellite phones and TV, etc.</i>	Information Infrastructure – <i>Leadership linkage to broader external groups</i>
Media Presence – <i>Non-traditional media sources (cell phones, blackberries), legitimate media outlets working with adversary; provide message content for different media identified in FM 3-24, Table 5</i>	Media Presence (IO task) – <i>Most active cell and internet areas = emerging media hot spots; US/Coalition media access to denied areas; soldier access to denied areas; soldier access to non-traditional media (cell phones or blackberries,...)</i>
Media Capability - <i>Social Network Sites, Blogs, Viral media (i.e. YouTube)</i>	Media Capability – <i>Cultural assessment of what user/account should feed different media outlets</i>
Public Opinion – <i>Host Nation Populace International Groups Religious/political/business sponsors/terrorists</i>	Public Opinion <i>Media Target Sync and Deconfliction Determine probable social “collateral effects” Need for follow up SC Ensure Policy Reinforcement</i>
Assessment: 2 nd order effects (expansion of media coverage)	Assessment: 3 rd order effects update media profile of target audiences

Table 2 Focus Areas

Similarly, PSYOP planners must maximize the operational reach of SC. They accomplish this by defining the cultural profile, or audience analysis, of different leadership and minority groups from the local to the international level, then synchronizing the targeting of specific messages to specific groups. This includes a prediction of adversary media capability and dissemination paths, so US forces can directly engage or flank those local and international dissemination paths with SC *as an integral part of the operation*.

The PSYOP/IO Media Presence and Public Opinion tasks in Table 3 work together. They assume that PA analysis has already identified avenues to saturate the information environment with relevant thematic content. In turn, the commander or his staff may plan to cite and link PA content through additional news releases, social networking to local leaders, blogs, public tours/meetings with local/religious/international leadership, etc. This converts initial SC into indirect fires, allowing rapid expansion with minimal expense of combat power. While PA assessment seeks to track this transition from direct media targeting to indirect media outlets, PSYOP personnel refine SC effectiveness by maintaining focus on key decision makers to relate changes in their behavior (new laws or fatahs, shifts in popular demonstration or lobbying, steps to increase authority in self-governance, improved local unity of effort, increased global attention to an issue that indicates a plausible (if not causal) link to coalition efforts) or the converse. This division of labor establishes PSYOP personnel as the force that answers Rendon's previous charge: "what I say is meaningless, what you hear and believe and *do* is critical."

Finally, PSYOP planning for SC should guide rules of engagement for a particular operation. Factors include limiting the amount, type, or duration of violence and researching the responses for probable consequences of the operation: civilian casualty, property damage, claims that an operation targeted an "off-limits" site or group, and mistakes. This doesn't imply

skewing information, simply identifying which stories are likely to cause different effects in different groups.

With a framework for focus areas, roles, and responsibilities established, the mission type order provides the cornerstone for executing successful SC across the Corps and in sync with higher headquarters and external agencies. Planners should focus on the **situation** and **execution** sections, addressing other sections as required.

Mission Type Order SC Considerations

Joint Intelligence of the Operational Environment forms the basis for strategic communication targeting. When analyzing enemy forces in the **situation** section, kinetic requirements will likely have prompted intelligence providers to identify friendly personnel as well as opposition groups. However, intelligence agencies may not map the SC inputs and outputs of those groups unless prompted.

Since the silent majority controls a key capability to sway or neutralize adversary influence and behavior, in a “hearts and minds” battle, the **situation** must also include a section for international/global audiences. At a minimum, SC analysis should define the key drivers and issues that shape the Corps commanders SC mosaic. Start by categorizing the adversary and international audiences by identity. Typical groupings include political, religious, ethnic, and national. Fuse this with information infrastructure and media capability including at least blogs, viral media, group websites, social networking services like Twitter/ Facebook/ MySpace, cell phone service to create a model of the media target set inside the adversary’s locale and for important external players.

Specific considerations depend upon the level of warfighting. Corps level analysis should focus on regional governments, leadership of international religious political organizations such

as the Muslim Brotherhood, economic stakeholders, and foreign militaries that may be sensitive to their overt/covert support for insurgents. BCTs should initially look to media sources, religious leaders, social/tribal leaders, governments, and academia²⁰. They should also add an additional level of detail for the local opposition's and leadership's personal networks within their AO. During execution, assessing information propagation through this model will provide the QRF-like ability to adjust SC messages at each level of command.

For each operation, the **enemy forces** section of the order should encapsulate the threat, the methods, and the means for PA, PSYOP, and combat personnel reading the order, such as the following hypothetical example: "Multiple predominantly Sunni extremist groups dominate in the Northern (MND-N) and Baghdad (MND-B) areas of operation (AOs). With slight differences, these groups attempt to gain support via videos posted on websites, the blogs iToot and Dwenn²¹, and the stories on Twitter social network. Religious themes dominate, but goals appear political. Extremist groups in MND-N and MND-B repeatedly share videos of the same attacks and claim victory within 24 hours of an attack."

Within the **execution** section of the order, commanders should focus on including specific direction on how SC influence their **concept of operations (CONOPS)**, clearly defined **tasks** for Combat, PA, and PSYOP personnel, and critical information requirements (CCIR) in the **coordination instructions**. Mission statements frequently provide limited SC and IO guidance: "aggressive information operations throughout will ensure continued dominance in the information domain" and hide behind the veil of not wanting to constrain planning. The shortfall becomes obvious if one uses the same language when articulating combat operations in the CONOPS. The resulting CONOPS might say: "in this phase, land forces must fight aggressively to ensure we win." Commanders should articulate which SC themes they expect to emphasize

during an operation, which audiences receive the priority of effort, how will operations split event based vs. time based SC, and how and when different segments of the operation build the overall SC picture (the national policies/themes this operation reinforces). So defined, subordinates can identify likely stories/pictures/media to reinforce themes, determine how and when to best relate to the local populace, etc. Failure to modify the CONOPS minimizes the size of the force a commander brings to the fight.

With a clear CONOPS, commanders must also specify specific communication, collection, and dissemination **tasks** for subordinates. What units/personnel will engage local audiences, when, and how (active/passive and media requirements)? What information requires consolidation and analysis at the HQ? Who collects the information (PA, PSYOP personnel, or both)? Who disseminates the information over which media (PA, PSYOP, commander)? How and when will information be shared with HQ?

Without CCIR in the **coordination instructions**, strategic communicators don't fully engage the operations and intelligence communities, leading to a lack of synchronization between operations and SC. To serve as a QRF, analysis of enemy situation and COAs must drive priority intelligence requirements (PIR) that clarify the use of adversary or international informational capabilities. Does any singular category (political, religious, national, or ethnic) group drive greater than 50% of recurring subject matter in a particular medium (social network, blog, website, or viral media)? If no singular group, does a "consortium" drive recurring subject matter? Does the group/consortium drive content exclusively within their category, or does a particular group/consortium influence multiple categories or media (i.e. a religious group that drives recurring content among other category groups or in another medium)? Is there a cultural peer competitor that could use truthful US information to address the silent majority within their

category, or indirectly from another category (such as a mid-eastern political activist group that would influence Islamic blog sites)?

Using blogs as an example, Marc Lynch identifies blogger types as activists (extreme political advocates of a pre-existing agenda), bridge builders (frequently translate between English and Arabic and are prone to easily slanted partisan posting), and public-sphere bloggers (deeply engaged in debate)²². When dealing with a social justice theme, such as “Extremism endangers families” especially attacks on innocent bystanders and civilians, Lynch’s categorization might help SC personnel choose particular blogs for wider dissemination and thereby contribute to a greater discussion and greater SC resonance with the silent majority.

Aside from organic forces discussed in the **execution** section, SC planners must address the interaction of PA and PSYOP personnel with higher headquarters and external agencies during execution. Corps PA should devise roles and responsibilities for collecting subordinates’ information and sharing information with groups such as the Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF), including other executive departments such as DOS and USAID, and coalition LNOs. How does a particular operation affect local and national stability, security, or economic prosperity? How might unwarranted casualties or constraints harm the military, non-government organization (NGO), local leader relationship and what active and passive controls work best? For example, maybe a layered security posture with external US checkpoints reduces the number potential adversaries, thereby allowing SC to reinforce the message that local security forces provide NGO security. This image should promote themes of freedom security, hope, opportunity. Further, from the author’s own experience, a Corps or geographic commander may actively communicate the need for international security and state partnerships as a regional stabilizer to encourage coalition members to assume a greater leadership role in an operation.

Recommendations for Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Logistics, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF)

Current Army PA doctrine lags the fight. FM 3-61.1 places too much emphasis on traditional media operations, with little reference to how to conduct strategic communication. Foremost, the information objectives and information strategy should be re-written to include providing information to educate and activate the silent majority and international audiences in any campaign. Revisions should discuss additional mission essential tasks for journalists and broadcasters in the PAD, MPAD and PAOC. They should also address the key information and the methods for modifying an operational FRAGO rather than focusing on producing a PA specific FRAGO. FM 3-61.1 should capture the SC relationships between PA, PSYOP, the JIATF, and coalition LNOs. Army doctrine for targeting and fires should be revised to include a specific discussion of the operational preparation of the battle space (OPB) considerations for SC as well as the fires synchronization and deconfliction discussions discussed above.

Beyond Army doctrine, Joint Doctrine for PA fails to capture the current information environment, the relationship between PA, PSYOP, and Interagency players, and how PA functions can shape that environment. The public information function must be revised to address international audiences, particularly the 1.2B member silent majority. To address these new audiences, AFRTS must expand responsibilities in the broadcast sphere to include blogs, viral media, and social networks. New JIB core tasks for the media support, media response, and liaison cells will help articulate how functional components and joint commands respond in a new medium (or media). Further, to develop QRF capability in the information sphere, the JIB J3 needs to move from a focus on information management and documentation of lessons learned to

a real-time assessment in concert with PSYOP planners who can update their models to provide a more accurate analysis of what messages will resonate with different target audiences. PA planning considerations should mirror the changes to Army FM 3-61.1. Although extensive, these changes will account for the new information environment, ensure the right information reaches the right global audiences, and codify the right positions, roles, and responsibilities to achieve a comprehensive integrated strategic communication effort.

A final issue is more policy than doctrine. Current MNC-I policy contains a loop-hole that limits official engagements via blogging and social networking. Official websites are those created, maintained, or funded as part of an official military duty. Unofficial sites are personal, not related to military duties, and not paid for by DoD funds²³. The use of a military alias on commercial or public blog, social network, text message services or viral media sites does not fall into either category. This paper recommends modifying the definition of official sites to include the military use of public or commercial sites. This recommendation draws a parallel between land operations that traverse public lands or property in foreign territories for the purpose of achieving US political objectives, and using public or commercial sites in the information domain to achieve US political objectives. As with any electronic communication, cyber security concerns apply; however, to contend for the information domain, the Army must occupy the territory of that domain.

Requiring information collection and dissemination within a timeframe of hours, in a complex risk environment, may necessitate reorganization. Corps and BCT commanders must seriously challenge the idea separating PSYOP and PA in their own decision processes. The very act of “telling the story” imparts a perspective. Any perspective not shared by all readers contains some amount of bias, so why constrain our SC with unrealistic fear of collateral damage

and subsequent expectations we wouldn't place on any other MOS? If the goal is delivering truthful information to the right audience via the right mechanism, how can a commander mitigate risk **without** expert cultural advice? When is it better to not attack a suicide bomber because he's in a crowd of people, vice letting him hit the detonator and take out innocent civilians with him? The PSYOP thin slicer offers a critical combat multiplier, an essential tool to help commanders emphasize the right messages with the right audiences at the right time to amplify our actions and present a unified and authoritative national message.

SC can be visualized as a volleyball match. The US/coalition side has information that will affect the outcome of the game. Players in each row represent different Army echelons, coalition liaison officers, and/or interagency staff. SC offers the opportunity to move critical information from our side to the other side of the net. A "spike" helps, but isn't necessary to score. If SC from a rear echelon resonates with the adversary and scores a point, great; otherwise, our front line is there to spike the ball at the right time and place, or to defend the net if the adversary takes a shot at the information we provided. Volleys aren't always short and sweet. Sometimes the best defense US/coalition forces can muster will be a dig to keep the volley going. The important point is to keep moving our information to the other side of the net to maximize our opportunity to spike and score.

Another organizational change that would help refine SC synchronization involves attaching fires personnel to SC organizations. Fires personnel are already familiar with Fire Support Coordination Measures (FSCMs). They're trained to think multi-dimensionally (time/altitude/azimuth), to consider a variety of munitions, and to deconflict fires in order to avoid fratricide and collateral damage. Fires personnel can bring the same operational rigor to SC efforts. FSCMs might include "No Fire Areas" such as politically or culturally sensitive

themes. Additionally, “Restricted Fire Areas” might involve coordination of a specific message between echelons or adjacent BCTs with competing social/political audiences. Message dimensions include time, social leadership, religion, ethnicity, international politics, local vs. regional effects, etc. By focusing on the SC mosaic, Corps SC deals with the “deep fight” while BCT SC deals with the close fight. Deconfliction should begin by addressing targeting responsibilities, direct communication and indirect communication by coalition members or international experts, and messaging media available at each echelon.

Such a sweeping array of doctrinal and organizational recommendations requires multiple recommendations for successful training. Commanders at the BCT and higher level should develop techniques for identifying strategic communication decisive points and determining the right blend of active and passive SC to achieve an objective. Since an accurate popular international response would be difficult to model, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) should collect campaign data to develop case studies of different international target audiences from different areas of responsibility (AORs). These SC scenarios should be woven into command post exercises and higher while units are preparing to deploy. Corps commander training should emphasize interagency and coalition interaction, synchronization and amplification of themes from lower echelons and throughout the coalition, and awareness/manipulation of the SC mosaic. BCT training should stress operational preparation of the environment (OPE), identification of SC decisive points related to their own kinetic and civil-military operations, and strategic communication direction (mission type orders), collection, and dissemination outwards and upwards through their chain of command.

At the technical level PA, fires, and PSYOP personnel need the opportunity to practice the new mission essential tasks articulated in this paper. These skills must be developed over

time as PA personnel learn to operate new media. Based on prevailing commercial standards, the Army should develop standards and define a baseline of information services required in each geographic and functional command. Army procedures should address the collection and dissemination of SC media at the BCT level, between BCT and Corps, and between Corps and interagency/coalition partners.

Training and exercising analytical skills required for quick reaction are more challenging. For training, PA personnel should monitor existing blogs, social networks, and viral media that impact their AOR, and diagram the different categories and media within that AOR. Evaluation should consist of a control question on a recurring theme within those media, such as, “What are the popular, political, and adversary perceptions surrounding increased patrols in neighborhood or town XYZ. Personnel should be able to identify the theme, determine the media where that theme propagates, determine the dominant player(s), recommend a competing player/group/or medium, and assess the impact of a particular message on the information environment. To maintain security while testing collection and dissemination skills during exercises, SC planners should limit events to distribution among proprietary lists of only Army/interagency/coalition partners.

Individual combat soldiers need to develop strategic communication “mindedness”. Professional military education must go beyond teaching soldiers to respond to interviews. The orders discussed in this paper show the linkage between USG strategic intent and tactical ops. Tactical leaders need to practice identifying which of their planned actions has positive strategic communication value and which of their risks could cause a SC problem. BCTs should provide a standard decision aid, or mnemonic that helps soldiers reinforce the right themes under stress, such a mnemonic can be changed with each operation or may become a standard for operations

with that AO. The SOF mantra “behind, with, through” provides a solid example of how to frame actions *and* remarks during and following operations. Information collection capabilities at the tactical level must be seamless and simple because soldiers don’t have time or energy to worry about one more piece of gear.

As the previous paragraph points out, information collection capabilities must be seamless. SC requires few additional resources, but planners should investigate the utility of inexpensive (less than \$300) lightweight (less than 1lb) commercial-off-the-shelf “helmet cameras” for all (not just some) fielded forces. All are designed to work with computer and video equipment. Several are designed for motocross, mountain biking, and rainy environments. If the adversary always plans to exploit the information domain, then relying on the chance opportunity of an embedded reporter or a supportive local with a camera phone constitutes unnecessary operational risk. Personnel security offers an obvious counterpoint to the “helmet cam” argument, but security concerns are easy to overturn. Once engaged by the enemy, friendly troop positions and movements are known. Video offers an additional source of intelligence for analyzing adversary actions that may go unnoticed during the heat of battle. Personal video offers a proven way to document performance and improve TTP in everything from professional sports to air combat.

An “always on” video system frees the soldier to engage the enemy without having to think about finding media to exploit the SC value of the event. Soldiers understand that war is ugly, and that graphic images are likely to alienate more than they help. For this reason, the Army should work with Air Force weapon system video experts (from precision bombs) to determine the best compromise between finding the right information on the tape and eliminating the fear of “big brother” waiting to discipline a soldier for wartime transgressions. To be fair,

early notification of potential misconduct allows the Army to take the moral high ground before the enemy can exploit a situation and the soldier's profession assumes the highest moral standards. At times, especially early, our soldiers may falter, but they will not fail.

Strategic communication places few requirements on logistics, personnel, and facilities. Since SC constitutes a capability within existing operational units, logistical requirements may actually decrease as reliance on traditional media decreases. SC tasks call for a change in personnel use rather than an increased number of personnel. Foundational training schools may require additional time to teach specific technical skills related to new media, but personnel quotas shouldn't change.

Conclusion

In the strategic communications arena, the US Army faces a peer competitor equal to or better than any in her history. In spite of this, we continue to target only a small portion of the global audience we claim will decide the war. We further limit ourselves by overlooking common litmus tests we apply to things like command relationships: "Who has the preponderance of the combat force, and the capability to command and control the force? Will that organization employ the entire force 100% of the time, or dedicate forces to other missions and commanders?" The logical answer for this mission set is the Army, yet the service remains trapped in an institutional chrysalis rather than creating the guidance units need to emerge with a fuller spectrum SC capability.

Such a transformation requires Army leadership to refocus the service. Linking service objectives provide the bridge between national policy and combat action, but warfighting Corps must also reshape their organizations by focusing on the different tasks affecting the different echelons of their command. Broad reaching changes include: redefining roles and responsibilities

and insisting on more complementary efforts between PA and PSYOP forces, developing expert PSYOP cultural “thin-slicers” with a perception/reaction mindset, cultivation of indirect SC fires, and (most critically) synchronizing SC with every aspect of every operation by improving mission type orders.

Of course the Army retains service responsibilities. To evolve, the Army must develop new constructs for training strategic decision makers, electronic journalists, and front line communicators. To feed the fight, the Army must search out not only new methods for dissemination, but new means for collecting front line information, soldier mounted cameras are just one option for beating the insurgent in the information race. To synchronize these complex effects, the Army should look to the resident expertise, fires personnel, to provide operational rigor in terms of weapons (different media), targets and timing, and deconfliction (within an echelon and across echelons. All the preceding changes will be slower without improvements to both Army and Joint Doctrine.

When mission type orders help individual soldiers understand how their actions and words shape the strategic fight, BCTs will succeed in their missions; host nations experience better security, economic freedom, and self-governance. The host nation and international governments will expand their network of influence with local and international peers as well as political and religious leaders. The actions of our friends and our common enemies will determine our SC success.

USG SC Priorities ²⁴ :	Offer a positive vision of hope and opportunity, Isolate and marginalize violent extremists who threaten freedom and peace, Nurture common interests and values
Army Imperatives: Sustain, Prepare, Transform	Notional GWOT Objective: Define and implement doctrine and procedures to educate and activate global audiences on the issues critical to the strategic environment of the Global War on Terror.
Notional Corps Objectives and Tasks:	<p>Geographic Combatant Commander Objective: Reinforce USG diplomatic efforts through actions and communications.</p> <p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synchronize strategic communication targeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define SC framework for messages Develop themes for each operation Issue standardized orders Identify US, international, and local regional audiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop key interests and content Pre-build emergency SC guidance (atrocities vs. legitimacy, collateral damage) Implement 24/7 collection/dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soldier to people, Leader to leader relationships, Traditional media, social networks, military to HN and coalition governments and NGOs Assess impact/outcome and refine audience profile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st order: direct transmission/receipt 2nd order: leader, media, or popular response 3rd order: policy, law, or popular behavioral change Impact synchronized with operation

Table 3: Linking Corps to Strategic Guidance

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